

Applicant: Karpel
Application No.: 10/715,204
Examiner: B. Gehman

Amendments to the Claims

1. – 14. (Cancelled)

15. (New) A hard case for carrying a small article comprising:

a plurality of elongated hard panels arrayed in a flat parallel side-by-side transverse arrangement and articulated together in a spaced manner to enable the panels to be folded up into a rectangular shape with end panels overlapped;

an inner rectangular open top box including a bottom portion and side and end wall portions, the bottom portion of said open top box being fixed to one of the plurality of panels next adjacent to an end panel, one wall portion of the open top box being fixed to said next adjacent end panel;

said open top box being foldable down horizontally to a flat configuration, and being foldable up vertically to an open top box configuration;

the hard case in a first condition, when carrying a small article, having the open top box folded up vertically to its open box configuration with the panels folded around the box and the two end panels overlapped, and in a second condition, when not carrying a small article, the open box is folded down horizontally to its flat configuration with the panels wrapped around the flat box to form a flat, compact structure, configured and dimensioned to be carried in a person's pocket or pocketbook.

16. (New) A hard case according to claim 15 wherein the panels are made of cardboard covered with one of fabric, plastic and leather.

17. (New) A hard case according to claim 15 wherein the panels are composed of thin sheets of one of metal and plastic.

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18. (New) A hard case according to claim 15 wherein the panels have cushioning.
19. (New) A hard case according to claim 15 wherein a latch is provided for closing the hard case when in the first condition.
20. (New) A hard case according to claim 15 wherein latching is provided for closing the hard case in the first and second conditions.
21. (New) A hard case according to claim 15 wherein a magnetic strip is provided to maintain closure of the hard case in the first condition.
22. (New) A hard case according to claim 15 wherein the panels are made of cardboard pieces spaced apart about twice the thickness of the cardboard.
23. (New) A hard case according to claim 15 wherein in the second condition the side walls fold down horizontally flat, such that the one side wall folds out of the inner box onto the attached end panel and an opposite side wall folds into the inner box onto the bottom of the inner box.
24. (New) A hard case according to claim 15 wherein at least one of the plurality of panels is configured with a slot to receive an adjacent panel therein in sliding relationship.
25. (New) A hard case according to claim 15 wherein a panel adjacent to said one panel is divided in half by a hinge to enable the panel to fold back upon itself.
26. (New) A hard case according to claim 15 wherein the end wall portions are flanged to contact at least one of the plurality of panels of the wrap-around structure.

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27. (New) A hard eyeglass case comprising:

a wrap-around structure including front, bottom, back, and top panels, the front panel articulated to the bottom panel, the bottom panel articulated to the back panel, and the back panel articulated to the top panel; and

an inner box structure including a bottom portion secured to the bottom panel and a pair of end walls extending from opposite ends of the bottom portion, the end walls having a vertical position in which the end walls extend substantially perpendicularly to the bottom portion to define a space therebetween and a horizontal position in which the end walls extend substantially parallel to the bottom portion,

wherein the hard case has a first configuration in which the end walls are in the vertical position and the front, bottom, back, and top panels wrap around the inner box to enclose an article located in the space and the hard case has a second configuration in which the end walls are in the horizontal position and the front, bottom, back, and top panels wrap around the inner box such that the hard case has a flat configuration configured and dimensioned for carrying in a person's pocket or pocketbook.

28. (New) A hard case according to claim 27 wherein the inner box structure further comprises a pair of side walls extending from opposite sides of the bottom portion and interposed between the pair of end walls, wherein the pair of side walls extend substantially perpendicularly to the bottom portion when the end walls are in the vertical position and the pair of side walls fold down substantially parallel to the bottom portion when the end walls are in the horizontal position.

29. (New) A hard case according to claim 28 wherein one of the side walls folds down onto the front panel.

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30. (New) A hard case according to claim 29 wherein the one side walls is secured to the front panel.
31. (New) A hard case according to claim 29 wherein the panels are made of cardboard covered with one of fabric, plastic and leather.
32. (New) A hard case according to claim 29 wherein the panels are composed of thin sheets of one of metal and plastic.
33. (New) A hard case according to claim 29 wherein a latch is provided for closing the hard case when in the first configuration.
34. (New) A hard case according to claim 29 wherein the panels are made of cardboard pieces spaced apart about twice the thickness of the cardboard.